

**Appln No. 09/672,287
Am dt date May 17, 2004
Reply to Office action of February 2, 2004**

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office action dated February 2, 2004, the examiner rejected claims 1-4, 6-11 and 16-20, but indicated that claims 9-11 and 13-15 were allowed. In an effort to hasten allowance, applicant has canceled the claims directed to a negative active material, claims 1-4, 6-8, 16, 19 and 20, reserving the right to pursue those claims in a continuation application.

It is noted that while the examiner allowed method claims 9-11 and 13-15, method claims 17 and 18 which depend from allowable method claim 9 were rejected. It appears that the rejection of claims 17 and 18 may have been due to the examiner's misreading of the dependency of these claims, and therefore, applicant requests that the examiner reconsider the rejection of claims 17 and 18. It is applicant's belief that these claims are allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim. Applicant also wishes to call to the examiner's attention that a minor amendment to claim 9 has been made to correct a typographical error.

Claims 9-11, 13-15, 17 and 18 remain in this application. Applicant requests the early allowance of these claims. However, if there are any remaining issues, the examiner is asked to contact applicant's counsel at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,
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